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EXAMINER	
PARK, CHAN S	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/803,938	URABE, AKIO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	CHAN S. PARK	2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *19 March 2004*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-17* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *19 March 2004* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Chan S. Park

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *6/18/04*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. An initialed and dated copy of Applicant's IDS form 1449 is attached to the instant Office action.

Claim Objections

The following quotations of 37 § CFR 1.75(a) is the basis of objection:

> (a) The specification must conclude with a claim particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention or discovery.

2. Claims 1-17 recite the limitation "using the protocol having the immediacy". It is unclear if this protocol is referring to the "the predetermined protocols". If they are the same, the examiner suggests the following corrections:

Claim 1, line 12, "the protocol" should be -- the predetermined protocols --;

Claim 7, line 9, "the protocol" should be -- the predetermined protocols --; and

Claim 16, line 10, "the protocol" should be -- the predetermined protocols --.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-2, 4, 7, 10 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iida U.S. Patent No. 6,785,023 in view of Simpson et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/016559 (hereinafter Simpson).

3. With respect to claim 1, Iida discloses an image processing apparatus management system (network system in fig. 3 & col. 4, lines 11-18) comprising:

a managing apparatus (client machine 202) connected to a computer network (network in fig. 3); and

an image processing apparatus (network facsimile 201) that is connected to the computer network and managed by the managing apparatus via the computer network (client machine 202 controlling/managing the status update setting of the facsimile 201 according to col. 8, lines 25-43 & ST406~ST408 of fig. 5), wherein the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26), wherein at least one of the predetermined protocols has an immediacy (note that the HTTP of Iida is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation), and the image processing apparatus having a report generating/transmitting unit that generates report data (HTML file including the status of the network facsimile 201 according to col. 5, lines 4-14) and transmits the report data to the managing apparatus through the computer network (transmitting the HTML status file to the client according to col. 5, lines 54-67) using the

protocol having the immediacy (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26).

Iida, however, does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network via a firewall that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through.

Simpson, the same field of endeavor the HTTP network communication between a client computer (704) and a network printing device (printer 710 in fig. 9), discloses the HTTP network communication, wherein a client computer (704) can communicate with the network printing device 710 via a firewall (paragraph 73).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the network of Iida to include the firewall between the network facsimile 201 and client machine 202 for allowing the data transmission using HTTP as taught by Simpson.

The suggestion/motivation for modifying the network of Iida would have been to filter out unwanted communication packets in conventional manner (paragraph 72 of Simpson).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Iida with Simpson to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

4. With respect to claim 2, Iida discloses the image processing apparatus management system, wherein the network allows reply data (user specified desired update time in col. 8, lines 38-43) sent by the managing apparatus in response to the

report data, to pass through and reach the image processing apparatus (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26).

Again, as noted above in claim 1, Iida does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network via a firewall that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through.

Simpson, the same field of endeavor the HTTP network communication between a client computer (704) and a network printing device (printer 710 in fig. 9), discloses the HTTP network communication, wherein the client computer (704) can communicate with the network printing device 710 via a firewall (paragraph 73).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the network of Iida to include the firewall between the network facsimile 201 and client machine 202 for allowing the data transmission using HTTP as taught by Simpson.

The suggestion/motivation for modifying the network of Iida would have been to filter out unwanted communication packets in conventional manner (paragraph 72 of Simpson).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Iida with Simpson to obtain the invention as specified in claim 2.

5. With respect to claim 4, Iida discloses the image processing apparatus management system according to claim 1, wherein the protocol having the immediacy is hypertext transfer protocol (Again, the HTTP of Iida (col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines

23-26) is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation).

6. With respect to claim 7, Iida discloses an image processing apparatus (network facsimile 201 in fig. 3) that is connected to a computer network (network in fig. 3) that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26), wherein at least one of the predetermined protocols has an immediacy (note that the HTTP of Iida is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation), wherein a managing apparatus (client machine 202 in fig. 3) connected to the computer network manages a predetermined image processing apparatus (client machine 202 controlling/managing the status update setting of the facsimile 201 according to col. 8, lines 25-43 & ST406~ST408 of fig. 5), comprising:

a report generating/transmitting unit that generates report data (HTML file including the status of the network facsimile 201 according to col. 5, lines 4-14) and transmits the report data to the managing apparatus through the computer network (transmitting the HTML status file to the client according to col. 5, lines 54-67) using the protocol having the immediacy (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26).

Iida, however, does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network via a firewall that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through.

Simpson, the same field of endeavor the HTTP network communication between a client computer (704) and a network printing device (printer 710 in fig. 9), discloses the HTTP network communication, wherein the client computer (704) can communicate with the network printing device 710 via a firewall (paragraph 73).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the network of Iida to include the firewall between the network facsimile 201 and client machine 202 for allowing the data transmission using HTTP as taught by Simpson.

The suggestion/motivation for modifying the network of Iida would have been to filter out unwanted communication packets in conventional manner (paragraph 72 of Simpson).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Iida with Simpson to obtain the invention as specified in claim 7.

7. With respect to claim 10, Iida discloses the image processing apparatus, further comprising:

an abnormal condition detecting unit that detects an occurrence or a possibility of occurrence of an abnormal condition in the image processing apparatus (detecting error such as jam and lack of toner at the printer in col. 5, lines 8-12), wherein

if the occurrence or the possibility of occurrence of the abnormal condition is detected, the report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including therein, information about the abnormal condition (generating the HTML status file incorporating the detected error information in col. 5, lines 12-14).

8. With respect to claim 15, Iida discloses the image processing apparatus, wherein the protocol having the immediacy is hypertext transfer protocol (Again, the HTTP of Iida (col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26) is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation).

9. With respect to claim 16, Iida teaches a method in which a managing apparatus (client machine 202 in fig. 3) manages an image processing apparatus (client machine 202 controlling/managing the status update setting of the facsimile 201 according to col. 8, lines 25-43 & ST406~ST408 of fig. 5), the managing apparatus and the image processing apparatus being connected via a computer network (network in fig. 3), and the image processing apparatus being connected to the computer network that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26), wherein at least one of the predetermined protocols has an immediacy (note that the HTTP of Iida is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation), comprising:

the managing apparatus receiving report data from the image processing apparatus sent through the computer network (client machine 202 receiving HTML file including the status of the network facsimile 201 according to col. 5, lines 4-14 and lines 54-67) using the protocol having the immediacy (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26), wherein the report data includes information about the image processing apparatus (the status of the network facsimile 201 according to col. 5, lines 4-14 and lines 54-67);

the managing apparatus outputting contents of the report data received (outputting to the display of client computer in ST 405 of fig. 5 & col. 6, lines 1-20); and

the managing apparatus sending a reply data to the image processing apparatus, in response to the report data received (sending user specified desired update time upon receiving the HTML status file in ST403~ST406 of fig. 5 & col. 8, lines 38-43).

Iida, however, does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network via a firewall that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through.

Simpson, the same field of endeavor the HTTP network communication between a client computer (704) and a network printing device (printer 710 in fig. 9), discloses the HTTP network communication, wherein a client computer (704) can communicate with the network printing device 710 via a firewall (paragraph 73).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the network of Iida to include the firewall between the network facsimile

201 and client machine 202 for allowing the data transmission using HTTP as taught by Simpson.

The suggestion/motivation for modifying the network of Iida would have been to filter out unwanted communication packets in conventional manner (paragraph 72 of Simpson).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Iida with Simpson to obtain the invention as specified in claim 16.

10. With respect to claim 17, Iida teaches the method according to claim 16, wherein the protocol having the immediacy is hypertext transfer protocol (Again, the HTTP of Iida (col. 3, lines 56-59 & col. 4, lines 23-26) is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation).

Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Iida with Simpson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Hopper et al. U.S. Patent No. 7,061,391 (hereinafter Hopper).

11. With respect to claim 5, the combination of Iida and Simpson discloses the image processing apparatus management system according to claim 1, wherein the managing apparatus includes an informing unit (display for displaying the homepage in fig. 7) that informs an operator of contents of the report data (client machine displaying the homepage informing the user of the status of network facsimile according to col. 5, lines 4-14 & col. 6, lines 3-28).

The combination, however, does not explicitly disclose that the informing unit informs the operator of an identification of the image processing apparatus that sent the status report data.

Hopper, the same field of endeavor of informing the status report of the printing apparatus (displaying the printer status in fig. 2), discloses a client computer including an informing unit (monitor 34 in fig. 1) for informing the user of an identification of the image processing apparatus (displaying the name of each printer in col. 3, lines 33-36 wherein the printer name represents the identification of the printer according to col. 11, lines 17-19) that sent the status report data and the content of the report data (displaying the printer toner status in fig. 2).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the informing unit of Iida to display the identification of the image processing apparatus that sent the status report data as taught by Hopper.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to describe where in the printers are located by referring to the names (col. 3, lines 33-36 of Hopper).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 5.

12. With respect to claim 6, the combination of Iida and Simpson discloses the image processing apparatus management system according to claim 1, wherein the managing apparatus includes a report outputting unit (display for displaying the homepage in fig. 7) that outputs contents of the report data (client machine displaying the homepage

informing the user of the status of network facsimile according to col. 5, lines 4-14 & col. 6, lines 3-28).

The combination, however, does not explicitly disclose that the report outputting unit outputs the operator of an identification of the image processing apparatus that sent the status report data.

Hopper, the same field of endeavor of outputting the status report of the printing apparatus (displaying the printer status in fig. 2), discloses a client computer including a report outputting unit (monitor 34 in fig. 1) for outputting the user of an identification of the image processing apparatus (displaying the name of each printer in col. 3, lines 33-36 wherein the printer name represents the identification of the printer according to col. 11, lines 17-19) that sent the status report data and the content of the report data (displaying the printer toner status in fig. 2).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the report outputting unit of Iida to display the identification of the image processing apparatus that sent the status report data as taught by Hopper.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to describe where in the printers are located by referring to the names (col. 3, lines 33-36 of Hopper).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 6.

Claims 8, 9 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Iida and Simpson as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Haines et al. U.S. Patent No. 7,043,523 (hereinafter Haines).

13. With respect to claim 8, the combination of Iida and Simpson discloses the image processing apparatus according to claim 7, but the combination dose not explicitly disclose:

a remaining amount detecting unit that detects an amount of unused consumable product in the image processing apparatus, wherein

if the amount detected is equal to or less than a predetermined value, the report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including therein, information about the consumable product.

Haines, the same field of endeavor of the printing device generating a status report and transmitting the report to the user (the printer 14 sending status notification to the user in col. 4, lines 45-50), discloses a printing device (printer 14 in fig. 1) comprising:

a remaining amount detecting unit that detects an amount of unused consumable product in the image processing apparatus (detecting either "toner low" or "toner out" according to col. 7, lines 29-36), wherein

if the amount detected is equal to or less than a predetermined value (a predetermined value that distinguishes the toner statuses between "toner low" or "toner out" according to col. 7, lines 29-36. Note that this predetermined value must be in the system in order to distinguish the different toner statues), a report

generating/transmitting unit generates a status report data by including therein (generating the toner status report and emailing the report to a user in col. 7, lines 29-36), information about the consumable product (sending either "toner low" or "toner out" notification in col. 7, lines 29-36).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the image processing apparatus of Iida to include the remaining amount detecting unit and modify the report generating/transmitting unit to generate information about the consumable product based on the detected result as taught by Haines.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to notify the user with more accurate information about the consumable product, such as "toner low" or "toner out" statuses (col. 7, lines 29-36 of Haines).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 8.

14. With respect to claim 9, the combination of Iida and Simpson discloses the image processing apparatus according to claim 7, but the combination dose not explicitly disclose:

a product replacement detecting unit that detects whether a product in the image processing apparatus must be replaced, wherein

if the product replacement detecting unit detects that the product must be replaced, the report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including therein, information about the product to be replaced.

Haines, the same field of endeavor of the printing device generating a status report and transmitting the report to the user (the printer 14 sending status notification to the user in col. 4, lines 45-50), discloses a printing device (printer 14 in fig. 1) comprising:

a product replacement detecting unit that detects whether a product in the image processing apparatus must be replaced (detecting the "toner out" condition in col. 7, lines 34-36), wherein

if the product replacement detecting unit detects that the product must be replaced (the "toner out" notification apparently indicates that the toner must be replaced), a report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including therein, information about the product to be replaced (notifying the "toner out" condition in the email which indicates a new toner is needed according to col. 7, lines 34-36).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the image processing apparatus of Iida to include the product replacement detecting unit and modify the report generating/transmitting unit to generate information about the product to be replaced based on the detected result as taught by Haines.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to notify the user with when to replace the toner (col. 8, lines 15-20 of Haines).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 9.

15. With respect to claim 14, Iida discloses the image processing apparatus, further comprising:

a utilization state acquiring unit that acquires state (acquiring/determining whether the printer is in idling/operating/error state in col. 6, lines 7-20) information about a utilization state of the image processing apparatus (col. 6, lines 7-20), wherein

the report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including the state information therein, and transmits the report data to the managing apparatus (sending the status HTML file in col. 5, lines 54-67).

Iida, however, does not explicitly disclose that the report generating/transmitting unit transmits the report data to the managing apparatus at a predetermined interval.

Haines, the same field of endeavor of the printing device generating a status report and transmitting the report to the user (the printer 14 sending status notification to the user in col. 4, lines 45-50), discloses a printing device (printer 14 in fig. 1) for sending the status notification at a predetermined interval (sending the email status notification at a regular interval according to col. 7, lines 3-14).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the report transmitting unit of Iida to transmit the report data at a predetermined interval as taught by Haines.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to provide the user with the status report at a regular basis (col. 7, lines 3-14 of Haines).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 14.

Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Iida and Simpson as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Zerza et al. U.S. Patent No. 7,149,697 (hereinafter Zerza).

16. With respect to claim 11, the combination of Iida and Simpson discloses the image processing apparatus according to claim 7, but it does not explicitly disclose an inputting unit that inputs an instruction, wherein if the instruction is input, the report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including the instruction therein.

Zerza, the same field of endeavor the printer sending the report data to the user's PC (sending the consumable order information to the user's PC in col. 3, lines 58-63), discloses an image processing apparatus (printer in fig. 2) comprising an inputting unit that inputs an instruction (user of the printer entering desired pricing for particular consumables in col. 3, lines 43-48 & col. 4, lines 9-12), wherein if the instruction is input, a report generating/transmitting unit generates a report data by including the instruction therein (sending the consumable order information including the user input information to the user's PC in col. 3, lines 58-63).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the image processing apparatus of Iida to include an input unit and to modify the report generating/transmitting unit of Iida to generate the report data having the instruction therein as taught by Zerza.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to provide a method of ordering a particular consumable at the image processing apparatus and to notify the user's PC of the order that has been placed (col. 3, lines 42-63 of Zerza).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 11.

17. With respect to claim 12, the combination of Iida and Simpson discloses the image processing apparatus according to claim 7, but it does not explicitly disclose an order information inputting unit that inputs order information to order a consumable product, wherein if the order information is input, the report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including the order information therein.

Zerza, the same field of endeavor the printer sending the report data to the user's PC (sending the consumable order information to the user's PC in col. 3, lines 58-63), discloses an image processing apparatus (printer in fig. 2) comprising an order information inputting unit that inputs order information to order a consumable product (user of the printer entering desired pricing for particular consumables in col. 3, lines 43-48 & col. 4, lines 9-12), wherein if the order information is input, a report generating/transmitting unit generates a report data by including the order information therein (sending the consumable order information including the user input information to the user's PC in col. 3, lines 58-63).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the image processing apparatus of Iida to include an order input unit

and to modify the report generating/transmitting unit of Iida to generate the report data having the order information therein as taught by Zerza.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to provide a method of ordering a particular consumable at the image processing apparatus and to notify the user's PC of the order that has been placed (col. 3, lines 42-63 of Zerza).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 12.

Claims 1-3 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aiba U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0065773 in view of Leone, III et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0100651 (hereinafter Leone).

18. With respect to claim 1, Aiba discloses an image processing apparatus management system (printing system in fig. 1 & paragraph 0012) comprising:

a managing apparatus (server PC 1001 in fig. 1) connected to a computer network (Internet network in fig. 1); and

an image processing apparatus (user PC 300 executing image processing according to paragraph 0026) that is connected to the computer network (user PC 2000 connected via the Network in fig. 1) and managed by the managing apparatus via the computer network (server PC managing the user PC by providing the correct/latest printer driver according to paragraph 0066), wherein the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in paragraphs

0071 & 0072), wherein at least one of the predetermined protocols has an immediacy (note that the HTTP of Aiba is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation), and the image processing apparatus having a report generating/transmitting unit that generates report data (generating HTTP request for reporting/notifying the server PC 1001 for automatic update of printer drivers in paragraph 0071) and transmits the report data to the managing apparatus through the computer network (transmitting the HTTP request according to S901 in fig. 9 & paragraph 0071) using the protocol having the immediacy (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in paragraphs 0071 & 0072).

Aiba, however, does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network via a firewall that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through.

Leone, the same field of endeavor the HTTP network communication between a client computer (client platform 36) and a network server (server 30 in fig. 2), discloses the HTTP network communication (paragraph 0028, line 8), wherein a client computer communicates with the network server 30 via a firewall (paragraph 0028, lines 5-14).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the network of Aiba to include the firewall between the user PC 2000 and the server PC 1001 to allow the data transmission using HTTP as taught by Leone.

The suggestion/motivation for modifying the network of Aiba would have been to restrict the unwanted network communication (paragraph 0010, lines 3-5 of Leone).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Aiba with Leone to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

19. With respect to claim 2, Aiba discloses the image processing apparatus management system, wherein the network allows reply data (server PC 1001 sending HTML data and installation related module in response to the HTTP request in paragraphs 0072) sent by the managing apparatus in response to the report data, to pass through and reach the image processing apparatus (user PC 2000 receiving HTML data and installation related module in paragraphs 0072).

Again, as noted above in claim 1, Aiba does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network via a firewall that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through.

Leone, the same field of endeavor the HTTP network communication between a client computer (client platform 36) and a network server (server 30 in fig. 2), discloses the HTTP network communication (paragraph 0028, line 8), wherein a client computer communicates with the network server 30 via a firewall (paragraph 0028, lines 5-14).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the network of Aiba to include the firewall between the user PC 2000 and the server PC 1001 to allow the data transmission using HTTP as taught by Leone.

The suggestion/motivation for modifying the network of Aiba would have been to restrict the unwanted network communication (paragraph 0010, lines 3-5 of Leone).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Aiba with Leone to obtain the invention as specified in claim 2.

20. With respect to claim 3, the combination of Aiba and Leone discloses the image processing apparatus management system according to claim 2, wherein when the report data sent by the image processing apparatus includes a request for a program (user PC transmitting HTTP request for the printer driver update in paragraph 0071. Note that the printer driver is a program according to paragraph 0105), the management apparatus includes the program in the reply data (sending/downloading the installation-related modules in the response to the HTTP request in paragraph 0072).

21. With respect to claim 7, Aiba discloses an image processing apparatus (user PC 300 executing image processing according to paragraph 0026) that is connected to a computer network (Internet network in fig. 1) that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in paragraphs 0071 & 0072), wherein at least one of the predetermined protocols has an immediacy (note that the HTTP of Aiba is interpreted as the predetermined protocols having an immediacy since HTTP protocol allows immediate access to the web in the WWW browser operation), wherein a managing apparatus connected to the computer network manages a predetermined image processing apparatus (server PC managing the user PC by providing the correct/latest printer driver according to paragraph 0066), comprising:

a report generating/transmitting unit that generates report data (generating HTTP request for reporting/notifying the server PC 1001 for automatic update of printer drivers in paragraph 0071) and transmits the report data to the managing apparatus through the computer network (transmitting the HTTP request according to S901 in fig. 9 &

paragraph 0071) using the protocol having the immediacy (HTTP protocols for exchanging the HTML file in paragraphs 0071 & 0072).

Aiba, however, does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus is connected to the computer network via a firewall that allows data transmitted using predetermined protocols to pass through.

Leone, the same field of endeavor the HTTP network communication between a client computer (client platform 36) and a network server (server 30 in fig. 2), discloses the HTTP network communication (paragraph 0028, line 8), wherein a client computer communicates with the network server 30 via a firewall (paragraph 0028, lines 5-14).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the network of Aiba to include the firewall between the user PC 2000 and the server PC 1001 to allow the data transmission using HTTP as taught by Leone.

The suggestion/motivation for modifying the network of Aiba would have been to restrict the unwanted network communication (paragraph 0010, lines 3-5 of Leone).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Aiba with Leone to obtain the invention as specified in claim 7.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Aiba and Leone as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Salgado et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0067504 (hereinafter Salgado).

22. With respect to claim 13, the combination of Aiba and Leone discloses the image processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the report generating/transmitting unit generates the report data by including therein, a request to send a program (user PC transmitting HTTP request for the printer driver update as taught by Aiba in paragraph 0071. Note that the printer driver is a program according to paragraph 0105).

The combination, however, does not explicitly disclose that the image processing apparatus transmits the report data to the managing apparatus at a predetermined interval.

Salgado, the same field of endeavor of updating the printer driver system (fig. 4), discloses an image processing apparatus (workstation 10 in figs. 1~3) contacting/requesting a server for accessing/downloading updated version of printer driver (accessing either web server 24 or server 18 for printer driver update in paragraph 0023, lines 1-19) at a predetermined interval (paragraph 0022, lines 5-17).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the reporting generating unit of Aiba to generate and transmit the HTTP request to update the printer driver at a predetermined interval as taught by Salgado.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to eliminate an error due to an old printer driver by updating the driver with a new printer driver at a regular basis (paragraph 0022 of Salgado).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine three references to obtain the invention as specified in claim 13.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CHAN S. PARK whose telephone number is (571) 272-7409. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Moore can be reached on (571) 272-7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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